The DESIGNS for the UNKNOWN COINAGE of CAROLINA (RF-45B)

In the original question regarding RF-45, The Unknown Coinage for Carolina (CNL, p.399) we listed S.S. Crosby's statement as it appeared on page 144 of his book "The Early Coins of America, & etc.". Then in a subsequent issue (CNL, p.419) we presented the remarks of Mr. Raymond Williamson relative to the participation of John Hinckley Mitchell in a followup attempt to produce the Carolina coinage.

Now we have received from Mr. Eric P. Newman of St. Louis, Missouri, two designs that were found in the Birmingham Assay Office, Birmingham, England, among the Matthew Boulton correspondance. These sketches were found loose and it is uncertain which specific letters they may have accompanied. Each of the original sketches is about seven inches in diameter and has been photographically reduced for the illustrations.

State seal

There can be little doubt that these designs were intended for the Carolina coinage! In his 25 August 1787 letter (CNL, p.419) John Hinckley Mitchell stated "... I had intended to have transmitted to your Excell'y a few half pence struck on purpose - with the arms of the State of South Carolina - as a more proper specimen of my intentions, and had taken measures for that purpose, but had not had time to execute them before the vessel sailed which conveys this to your Excell'y. ..." Compare these two designs with the sketch of the State Seal of South Carolina as illustrated directly above!

This official Seal was adopted in 1805 following the original design of 1776. The oval on the left side of the seal displays a palmetto with an uprooted oak at its base symbolizing the successful defense in 1776 of a palmetto-log fort on Sullivan's Island against the oaken ships of the British, and the 12 spears bound to the trunk of the palmetto honor the other 12 colonies that fought in the Revolution. The oval on the right shows the figure of Hope carrying a laurel branch and walking across a beach strewn with swords and daggers symbolizing South Carolinas wish to remain forever independent in spite of dangers. And thus - today - we know with reasonable certainty the general design for the Unknown Coinage for Carolina.

There is also in "Crosby" yet another discussion on this subject that appears on page 367. As our Patrons realize, Crosby's book was printed and issued in sections over an extended period of time and in a few cases material that should have been included in an early section appeared later in one of the final sections. This is one of those cases and the material was overlooked at the time the RF-45 question was originally presented. To complete the story we are reproducing that material from Crosby's book, as follows:

SOUTH CAROLINA.

The following, relating to the proposed coinage for South Carolina, was received from Mr. Bushnell, but not in season to be given in its proper place; we therefore present it in an additional chapter.

"In the year 1785, Mr. Charles Borrell made a proposal to the Legislature of South Carolina to coin 20,000 pounds in silver, and 10,000 pounds in copper for the use of the State, the petitioner agreeing to receive and accept the paper money of the State in exchange. This proposal being accepted, an ordinance was passed on the twenty-second day of March, 1786, granting the privilege to Mr. Borrell, and the Governor of the State was authorized to designate the device and legend for the coins. Mr. Borrell thereupon proceeded to Europe, and made a contract in Switzerland for the amount, and in a letter to Mr. Lewis Newhouse, of Charleston, dated July 21, 1786, he says, 'Be pleased to assure His Excellency, the Governor, that when you receive this, there will be on the way to Charleston, from One Thousand to Fifteen Hundred Louis d'ors, to be presented to the Treasury, and, after examination, a certificate, in due form, must be obtained, approving and declaring these monies to be just and conformable to the ordinance, and that in consequence, the State will receive the surplus.'

"A Louis d'or is 24 livres, equal to about $4.444. * * * * * This is all I have been able to learn respecting this coinage, the authority for which is given below.

"'An Ordinance respecting Silver and Copper Coins.

"'Whereas a proposal has been made by Mr. Charles Borrell, for coining a quantity of silver and copper money, and paying the same into the Treasury in exchange for the paper medium of this State;

"'Be it therefore ordained by the Honorable, the Senate and the House of Representatives, now met and sitting in General Assembly, and by authority

of the same, That if the said Charles Borrell shall, within Fifteen Months next ensuing, import into this State, copper coin, to the amount in value, of ten thousand pounds sterling, one moiety, in pieces of the value of one penny each, and the other moiety in pieces of the value of half a penny each, according to the standard of British half-pence, and silver coin to the value of Twenty Thousand pounds sterling, that is to say, Three fourths in pieces to the value of one shilling each, and the other fourth in pieces of the value of six pence each, which pieces shall be of the same weight as English shillings and sixpences, and contain an alloy proportioned to that of the French Crowns, and shall be impressed, stamped, and made with the figures, words, and devices, and in such way and manner as the Governor shall direct, and shall be respectively called a penny, a half-penny, a shilling and a sixpence ; and if the said coin shall on being assayed in the presence of the Treasurer be found to be of the value above mentioned, according to the standard aforesaid, which the Governor, on a certificate thereof from the Treasurers shall cause to be notified by proclamation, the Treasurers shall and may receive the same in exchange for the paper medium of this State and give the said medium in exchange for the said coin; and that the said coin shall be the lawful money of this State, receivable and issuable as such, at the value aforesaid, in all payments at and from the Treasury, and a tender in law according to the rates and value aforesaid, in satisfaction of all private contracts, and that the counterfeiting, clipping, defacing, or debasing the same, shall be felony, without the benefit of clergy.

"'In the Senate House, the twenty-second day of March, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty Six.

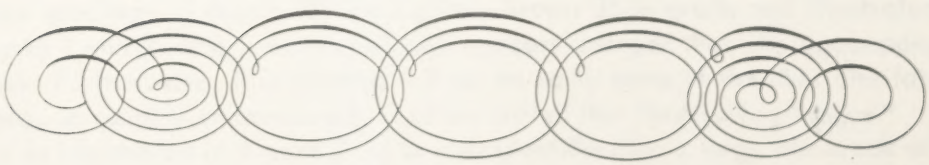
"'John Lloyd,

"'President of the Senate.

"'John Fauchereaud,

"'Speaker of the House of Representatives.'"

We will conclude with a paragraph already printed on page 144 : —

"Charleston, S. C. Sept. 29.

"Government has received information that Mr. Borel has compleated his contract of coinage for this State, in Switzerland, and may be soon expected here by the way of London. The stipulation was for 30,000*l.* in silver and copper, to be exchanged for the paper medium."